

ALL FOR JESUS!
NO. 1205

A SERMON
DELIVERED OF LORD'S-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 29, 1874,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“You serve the Lord Christ.”
Colossians 3:24.

THE gospel does not merely supply us with directions for holy living, but furnishes us with reasons for obedience, and tells us where to find the power to obey. Hence in the commencement of this chapter, before the apostle comes to any practical exhortation, he reminds us of our position and privileges. He bids us remember who and what we are as believers in Christ, that we may act accordingly. We are risen with Christ and therefore, our affection should not be set on earthly things; we are dead to the world, and therefore, we must not, *cannot* live in sin. Christ is our life, and therefore, we must walk after His example. The apostle knew right well that the conditions of believers here below are various, and therefore, he laid down distinct precepts for each position. Some are masters and others servants; some parents and others children, and in each case the requirements differ; but while he suited the exhortation to each one, he proposed a common motive for all. He reminded all believers, whether wives or husbands, children or fathers, servants or masters, that there is another and a better life which rewards are worthy of our ambition, which service should engross all our strength; he bade them have respect to that higher life, for they had been representatively lifted up into the highest heaven in the person of Jesus Christ, and with Him their hearts and desires should always be!

He bade them live the life of heaven here below, and order their footsteps, not in accordance with the fleeting things of time, but the enduring realities of eternity! He knew that in so doing, the inconveniences of the present would be forgotten in the glories of the future; and the trials of today would be more than counterbalanced by the joys of the hereafter. Our authorized translation is in the indicative, and states the fact, “You serve the Lord Christ.” Is it the fact with each of you? To how many in this place can it truly be said, “You serve the Lord Christ”? I find it might also, and not incorrectly, be translated in the imperative: “Serve you the Lord Christ.” In this sense it may be directed to those who have no share in it as a statement of fact. Let us take it in both senses. If we dare to hope that we serve the Lord Christ, let us listen to further exhortation, and serve Him still better; let us thank God for the measure of service which He has worked in us, and let us earnestly ask Him to work in us still further to will and to do. But if any of you are not yet included in the sacred band who calls Jesus, “Master and Lord,” then when you have trusted in His blood, come and yield your whole selves to Him! If, indeed, you are redeemed from God’s wrath through Him, I charge you to not be disloyal to the obligations under which you are laid, but from this time forth make it your joy to “serve the Lord Christ.”

To me, my text is one of the most joyful sentences from which I have ever preached. “You serve the Lord Christ.” What exaltation for a slave of Satan to become a servant of Christ! With what exultation do I hail permission to do *anything* for my Lord! To be blessed by Him, to be enriched with priceless gifts from His bounteous hand, this is truly His loving-kindness! But to be allowed to render tokens of gratitude in return is sweetest of all! Truly, we may say of this condescension, “Your gentleness has made me great.” By receiving anything from us, the Lord has lifted us as beggars from the dunghill, and set us among princes, even the princes of His people! It is a greater honor to *serve* Christ in the most menial capacity than to occupy the throne of the Caesars! I speak of honor. I may also dilate upon the happiness of the service of Jesus! It is the purest of pleasures; we long to express our affection for Jesus by acts of zeal. Love pants for expression, and is not obedience the tongue of love? That love is counterfeit which does not declare itself in some practical form or other by deeds of kindness, or gifts, or sacri-

fices, or patient endurance, or hearty praise. Beloved, let us count it an unrivalled honor and an unsurpassed delight to do anything for Jesus! For this service let us be insatiably ambitious, resolved at all costs to show our loyalty to our prince!

To serve us He laid aside His glorious array, and girt about Him the garments of a servant; for us He took a basin and towel, and stooped to wash His disciples' feet; for us He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross! Now, therefore, in our turn, by all the shame He bore, by all the labor He endured, by all the agonies He suffered, let us serve Him and Him, alone, forever! In handling the subject of Christian service, I shall note three things—first, we serve the Lord Christ *in the common acts of life*; secondly, we serve Him *in what are usually called religious acts*; and thirdly, we have learned to serve Him, and I trust, we may do it more and more, *in special acts of direct homage to Him*.

I. First, then, “You serve the Lord Christ,” **IN THE COMMON ACTS OF LIFE.** The fact that our text was addressed to the lowest rather than to the highest in worldly circumstances is very instructive. Paul has been visiting a family, and he has spoken a word to the wife, and a word to the husband; he has paid attention to the children, and given a warning to the father. He has, also, a message for the master of the house—but he does not address to either master, mistress, or children, that choice saying which he reserves for *servants*—“You serve the Lord Christ.” The Greek word, here translated *servants*, may be rendered, “slaves,” though its meaning is not confined to slaves, yet it includes them. There were many such in the Christian Church in Paul's days; truly converted men and women who were still held in bondage according to the cruel Roman law. The apostle goes into the kitchen, the cellar, the field, the winepress, the stable, and he says to his brothers and sisters toiling there—“You serve the Lord Christ.” He whispers in the ear of the aged man who acts as porter at the door, whom he knows to be a devout believer—and this is the secret which he whispers—“Fear not, brother, for despite your bonds, you serve the Lord Christ.”

In those hard days, when Paul wrote from Rome to Colosse, many a slave crept out from Caesar's household by stealth to listen to his gracious words. And poor workpeople gathered around him and were converted, and as he felt deep sympathy with them, he did not merely admonish them to be honest, industrious, conscientious, and obedient, as many a preacher would have done—but he went further and cheered them in the performance of their duties by assuring them that they served the Lord Jesus, and from Him they would receive a reward! He knew their sorrows and their provocations, and therefore, presented them with a rich consolation, and a stimulus. He exhorted them to act “as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not unto men.” This he said to servants, and to no other class in particular; he did not mean, thereby, that the wife, the husband, the master, and the child might not, and did not serve Christ, but he would have us infer that of those who did; whose lot was least distinguished—much more should those do whose responsibilities and opportunities are so much greater! If my poor servant should serve Jesus, how much more ought I to do it? If those with the least education and means are bound to serve Him, how much more should those who have 10 talents, lay out all for His glory?

My brothers and sisters, you see that those to whom Paul spoke were not preachers, nor deacons, nor elders of the church; neither were they magistrates, or persons of influence—they were simple servants, engaged in domestic duties, but he says of them, “You serve the Lord Christ.” Though what I have to say bears upon all present, I will keep to the line of thought which this fact naturally suggests. Those who are in low estate serve the Lord Christ by a *quiet acquiescence in the arrangement of providence which has placed them where they are*. Everyone knows that while the human race exists in its present condition, somebody must serve; it is a paradox, but it is also a truth, that if there were no servants, we should practically be all servants. There are a thousand offices which, if each person were obliged to perform them for himself, would be exceedingly tedious and unpleasant. They are now done for us by persons to whom use renders them not at all irksome. As things are at present constituted, there will be poor, and there will be rich; there will be servants [employees] and there will be masters [employers]. And when a man can say, “I have learned in whatever state I am therewith to be content, for I bow to the providence of my heavenly Father,” that man is, in his heart, serving the Lord Christ! To stand where the Lord places us, and cheerfully keep our position, has in it the essence of obedience!

We serve the Lord, next, in service, or in any other form of life, *if we exercise the graces of the Holy Spirit* in the discharge of our calling. The servant who is in all things trustworthy, and neither wastes his employer's time nor goods; the servant who does not watch his master's steps so as to loiter when he is out of sight, but conscientiously renders a fair day's work for his wage, treating his master as he would wish to be treated if their positions were exchanged—such an one exhibiting truthfulness, gentleness, sobriety, honesty, and industry, serves the Lord Christ as much in his labor as if he were an evangelist or an apostle! He does not preach *vocally*, but his *life* is a powerful sermon; He is a standing evidence of the power of religion, an argument which logic cannot overthrow, nor the most cunning sophistry confute! Holy living preaches where the minister cannot enter; it preaches from the nursery to a worldly mother, from the shop to a graceless tradesman, from the workroom to a godless employer. Where the preachers' words are denied a hearing, your lives will, nevertheless, win attention! At the first the gospel was very much spread in the noble families at Rome by means of their slaves; They noticed how different they were from other slaves, and as they observed their conduct, they inquired what this new religion was which so much improved them. Christians were *Christians* then! They made their Lord their first and last objective; they surrendered their whole lives to serving Him, and hence they were a power in all places! The poorest and meanest did not think themselves exempt from the sacred duty of spreading the faith! None, indeed, asked for a discharge in this war; domestic servants became missionaries to the families in which they resided, and acted as apostles in houses where the apostles could not enter! We serve Christ in such a position *by displaying the joy of the Lord in our service*. I lay great stress upon this point; many a soul has been converted to our Lord Jesus by noticing the cheerfulness of poor Christians.

If a heathen master had a Christian slave, he noticed how contentedly he accepted his hard toil and hard fare; he saw his countenance beaming with delight, and he even heard him sing for joy! He would naturally want to know the reason for that cheerfulness. Servants had a sorry lot with Roman masters and mistresses; I have seen some of the mere dog holes in which the slave who kept the door found sleeping quarters in the city of Pompeii; yet from such wretched abodes would rise the voice of psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs—and the children would wish to hear them, and the mistresses, too! Thus would the truth of God be spread! The Christian would not join in the general jollity upon heathen festivals—he would be absent from the amphitheatre when all the rest of the family were eager to view the spectacle. He had a quiet cheerfulness, and settled calm of mind which was all his own, and when trouble and distresses were in the house, he was the general comforter and friend. When he lay sick and scarcely anybody cared for him, he still did not lose heart, and when he was near to die, his joy came to a climax, and he breathed out his soul with a song! Such a servant served the Lord most effectually! I hope there are many in this church that, in these better days, are rendering equally valuable service in households where the name of Jesus is not revered. We, too, should be doing the same in the circles in which we move; our holy cheerfulness should be an invitation to our friends to come to Jesus. We shall never bring men to believe in a Master whose servants are unhappy in His service! To toll a knell as an invitation to a wedding feast is most absurd!

When we invite men to the banquet of saving grace, let us do it with smiling faces! beloved, let us mingle with the sternness of our integrity, and the solemnity of our life, that cheerfulness and joy which are the most natural and the most attractive ornaments of the Christian character! The true way to serve the Lord in the common acts of life is to *perform them as unto Him* and this can be done with everything which is lawful to do! God forbid we should maintain, as some do, a broad, unbending distinction between things secular and religious! This wicked age must, indeed, have its holy places, and its holy days; what is this but a confession that most of its buildings are unholy, and its days unholy, too? Of heaven it is written, "I saw no temple there," and we get nearest to the heavenly state when all superstitious notions about sacred places and sacred substances shall be swept away once and for all! To a man who lives unto God, nothing is secular—everything is sacred! He puts on his workday garment, and it is a vestment to him; he sits down to his meal, and it is a sacrament; he goes forth to his labor, and exercises the office of the priesthood; his breath is incense, and his life a sacrifice; he sleeps on the bosom of God, and lives and moves in the divine presence! To draw a hard and fast line and say, "This is sacred and

this is secular,” is, to my mind, diametrically opposed to the teaching of Christ and the spirit of the gospel!

Paul has said, “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself.” Peter saw a sheet let down from heaven in which were all manner of beasts and four-footed creatures which he was bid to kill and eat. And when he refused because they were unclean, he was rebuked by a voice from heaven, saying, “What God has cleansed, that call you not common.” The Lord has cleansed your houses, my brothers and sisters; He has cleansed your bed chambers, your tables, your shops; He has made the bells upon your horses holiness to the Lord! He has made the common pots and pans of your kitchens to be as the bowls before the altar if you know what you are, and live according to your high calling. You housemaids, you cooks, you nurses, you plowmen, you housewives, you traders, you sailors—your labor is holy if you serve the Lord Christ in it, if by living unto Him as you ought to live! The sacred has absorbed the secular! The overarching temple of the Lord covers all your houses and your fields! My brothers and sisters, this ennobles life! The bondsman is henceforth free; he serves not man, but God; the galley slave tugs the oar for Jesus; the menial ministers to the Lord. This cheers the darkest shades, for now we no longer complain of the hardness of our lot, but rejoice in it because we bear all for Jesus—and the burden which we carry is His cross which He, Himself, places on our shoulders! This ensures us a reward for all we do!

If in our service we receive but little thanks from man, and if after a life of toil, find ourselves but scantily furnished for old age, we will not complain, for our recompense is sure, our reward is in the hands of one who never forgets His servants! There is no unrewarded toil in the service of the Lord Christ, even a cup of cold water He remembers! He who serves Christ shall have it said of him at last, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” and in the fullness of His Master’s joy, into which He shall enter, He shall forget that for a while he lived unremunerated among the sons of men! Let this stimulate your zeal, my brethren! If you serve the Lord Christ, serve Him well! If you had work to do for Her Majesty the Queen, you would try to do your best; if she honored you with her commands, you would cheerfully obey them—how much more should you be awakened to diligence by the call of the infinite majesty of Him who bled for you! Perform your daily work with a heartiness which nothing else could beget in you; serve the Lord with gladness, and do all for love of His name! This I thought most important to bring forward, and though I cannot speak upon it as I would, yet I do earnestly urge all of you to remember that piety shines best around the domestic hearth, and that true religion is always best esteemed by unconverted men when they see it in connection with the common duties of life. They do not care how beautifully you pray at prayer meetings; they have very little respect for the excellent addresses you deliver in the Sunday school! But to *live* godly, soberly, righteously; to make other people happy, to be gentle in temper, to be yielding and forgiving, to be strictly upright and honest in your dealings with your fellow men—this is what the world will read and recognize! And when they see these things in you, the gospel will be commended to them, and they will be the more likely to listen to the truth of God as it is in Jesus.

II. Secondly, brethren, we ought to serve the Lord Christ in what we more commonly, but incorrectly, call RELIGIOUS ACTIONS. Every professor of religion should have something to do for Jesus Christ; though the discipline of our church does not turn out of it everyone who is an idler, I almost wish it did. I am afraid such a rule would diminish our numbers, but it would materially quicken our energy! Drones in the hive are of very little use as to making honey; they are at the bottom of all the quarrels, but they cannot really benefit the community. God save us from being drones! Let every man and woman who is really redeemed by the blood of Jesus have something to do and *do* it! I wish I could go round the whole of this company, this morning, and say, “Brother, do you serve the Lord Christ? Sister, do you the same?” But I will ask conscience to be my deputy, and leave your own hearts to answer the question. brother, sister, do you *really* serve Christ, or does it amount to this—you enjoy hearing, you enjoy singing, and so on, but you do nothing for Jesus? Bestir yourself, dear brother, sister—put out your talent to interest! Your Lord has said, “Occupy till I come.” Take heed lest He come and find your talent buried in the earth—your Lord’s money, and your napkin rotting in the soil! Let each one be serving Christ always according to his ability.

But supposing that we are serving Christ, as we think? It is well to raise a further question—are we with *our whole soul* serving *Christ*? For mark you, it is very easy to make a mistake here! We may be working in a legal spirit, and so not serving Christ. No doubt many attend to the outward matters of religion that they may win merit, or that they may prepare themselves for the receipt of the divine blessing. I do not wonder at the zeal and earnestness which some people show—if they hope to get to heaven by their works; they ought to be zealous, indeed! The legal spirit has a measure of power in it—the lash drives the slave on—the fear of punishment impels man to toil. But from such bondage you are free—“You are not under the law, but under grace.” Do, therefore, nothing with the hope of deserving well at the Lord’s hands, for this would be serving *self*! You are saved—serve, then, your *Savior* out of gratitude! Work, not to obtain life, but because you have life *already*, and delight to exercise that life to the honor of Him who gave it!

Some, I fear, do not serve Christ in what they do, for they go about it as a part of the general routine of their existence. It is the proper thing to go to a place of worship, therefore they go; it is generally expected of persons in their station to teach in the Sunday school, and they do so accordingly; they reckon that they ought to give a guinea if they see the name of a friend down on the list, therefore they do it! I am afraid that a great deal which is put down as *work for Christ* is a kind of sleep-walking, done without thought, or heart, or desire to glorify God! May the Holy Spirit awaken us out of such mere mechanical acts, and bring us to be in heart and soul the Lord’s willing, ardent workers! Some, I fear, render service in a party spirit. They serve and they think it is Christ they are serving—but in fact it is their own denomination or little church! They would be almost vexed to hear of God’s being honored among any other sort of Christians! They hope there will be a revival, but they would like it to be pretty nearly confined to the walls of their own chapel. They serve a *clique*, not Christ! Their sympathies never go beyond the particular section of the church to which they belong, and they are rather moved by emulation to see their own opinions dominant, than by zeal for the glory of God. Oh, brothers and sisters, break those bonds if they hold you! We ought to be zealous for the whole truth of God! We ought to labor to increase the number of those Christians who hold the gospel in its purity, but still never let our jealousy for pure religion degenerate into bigotry! Let us love the whole church more than a part, and Christ best of all!

In more instances, still, the self-spirit comes in to usurp the place of Jesus. I wonder how large a proportion of our zeal, if it were analyzed, could be accounted for by the desire of prominence, the ambition to be thought useful, and the wish to shine among our fellow men. I cannot set up a furnace here, and put my own zeal or yours into the crucible just now, but again I ask your conscience to be my deputy to analyze, honestly, the motive which sways you, and to tell you plainly how far you are serving *self*, and how far you are serving *Christ*. We are not always serving Jesus, I fear, when we think we are most doing so, for our main objective may be to please our fellow creatures. Our parents wish us to be active in the church, and therefore we do it; our friends would not be pleased if we were idle, and therefore we make ourselves active. From our position we are expected to be engaged in some department of Christian service, and therefore we enter upon it. Brothers and sisters, we must rise above this! What we do—whether we teach in the school, or visit the sick, or distribute tracts, or preach the gospel—we must do as unto the Lord, alone, and the master motive which should, indeed, crush out every other, must be this—“We serve the Lord Christ.” Brethren, let others take what they will for their motto, I charge you by the Holy Spirit—write this upon your banners—“We serve the Lord Christ!”

If any request you to serve this literary group, or that political faction, or to give your whole attention to some great moral reform, let your answer be, “We serve the Lord Christ.” Aid in anything that is good—whatever things are lovely, and of good report, and are for the benefit of mankind, you are bound to consider, but still your main lifework, your true business which must absorb your energies, and eat you up, is this—“We serve the Lord Christ.” They beckon us from this point, crying, “Come over and help us.” They call to us from the other corner, “Come and work with us,” but our answer must be, “We are an independent brigade; we are already committed to the noblest cause—we are sworn to a captain who has no rival! We are not able to promise ourselves to any of you, though in which you do good we

are your allies. Jesus we serve, and none else; God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” May God help us to do this always!

III. Now I am coming to the last part of my discourse, which to me is the most interesting, and I trust it may be so to you. We serve the Lord Christ IN SPECIAL ACTS DONE TO HIMSELF. I cannot tell how *you* feel, but I often wish I could do something for my Lord, Himself, personally. I frequently meet with kind souls to whom God has blessed my ministry; they express their thankfulness to God, and their love to me by aiding the various works committed to my charge, for which I am deeply grateful to them. But now and then a friend says, “I will cheerfully subscribe to your work, but I desire, also, to show my personal thanks to you. What can I do *for you*?” Now, towards those whom we esteem, this is a natural feeling, and in spiritual things there is a similar desire towards our divine benefactor. Our hearts long to offer something to Jesus, distinctly to Jesus, Himself. He has gone from us, or we would delight to minister to Him of our substance, to make Him a feast, to furnish Him a chamber, or to wash His feet. How gladly would we lend Him our coat, our animal, our guest chamber, or anything we possess! We would watch His every need, and endeavor to forestall it if He were here.

But He has gone. Are we, therefore, denied the privilege of rendering personal service to Him? I think not. Let it be our pleasant task, now, to consider what we can do directly and distinctly *for Him*. First, we can *adore our Lord*! We can bow at His feet, and worship Him as our Lord and our God. We shall do well to exercise our hearts in frequent acts of devotion to the Son of God. I do not mean offering prayers and petitions, excellent as these are, but holy contemplation, meditation, admiration, thanksgiving, and worship of Jesus. Far be it from us to neglect the adoration of any one person of the adorable Trinity in Unity—that were a grievous sin, but to worship Jesus does not involve forgetfulness of the Father or of the Holy Spirit. Fix your eyes on the person of Jesus! View His work on earth; contemplate His holy life and expiatory death; meditate upon His great love, His dying love, His living love! Follow Him from the tomb to Olivet and from the mountain’s brow to heaven’s gate, and the right hand of the Father! Pay your homage before His throne, blessing, praising, and adoring Him. We ought not to be satisfied without special acts of personal thanksgiving in which we exercise our love and reverence for Him who is altogether lovely in our eyes! True, we may be doing nothing for our fellow men while thus occupied, but Jesus is dearer to us than the whole race of men—and it is only His due that we render Him when we bow adoringly at His ever-blessed feet!

Then, brethren, when you have adored Him in secret, you should do the same in public by speaking well of Him, and extolling Him before others—not so much for their good as for Christ’s glory! I must confess I enjoy a sermon, best, in which I have to speak most of my beloved; if I have to set Him forth rather than to exhort you, I feel best pleased! There are other things to be done besides, but this is the sweetest task. I love to spend all my preaching time in making Jesus lovely in man’s eyes, in lifting Him up on a gloriously high throne in the esteem of those who listen to me. Brothers and sisters, do this, yourselves, in your common talk! Make a point of turning the conversation round till it bears on Him! Frequently begin a conversation about Jesus, and let men know that you glorify Him! In such special acts of devotion to His person, I pray you abound. Next, we should *pray for Him*! Do you understand that? Some do not. The psalmist says, “Prayer also shall be made *for Him* continually.” It is very delightful to pray for sinners, and pray for believers, but there should be special prayer *for* Jesus Christ; for the extension of His *kingdom*; that He may see of the travail of His soul, and that His Second Advent may speedily arrive! We should pray for the conversion of those who deny His deity, and those who fall into deadly errors as to His substitutionary sacrifice; we should make earnest supplication for the quickening of the love of Jesus in the hearts of the faithful, and for the turning of the disobedient to the knowledge of the truth of God. Such prayers should be very frequent with us for His sake, and with an eye to His glory! We pray for this and that, but surely Jesus ought to have a larger measure of our supplications!

Brethren, next to this there should be much *communion with Him*. I think I hear someone say, “Is that *serving* Him? I call it *enjoying* Him!” Yes, I know it is, and you may take it in which way you will, for He says, “If any man serves Me, let Him follow Me, and where I am there shall also My servant be”; so that you will be sure to be with Him if you serve Him, for to be near Him is one of the great essentials

of true service! Remember His dying request, “Do this in remembrance of Me.” And what was that? Why, it was to observe the Lord’s Supper, which is the outward and visible sign of communing with Him! If He attaches so much importance to the *outward* sign, how much more does He value the inner reality of fellowship with Himself? The fact is that the head which leans upon His bosom is thereby consecrated to His love, and is rendering Him service. Walk not at a distance from Jesus, or you will grieve Him! Abide in Him, and you will bring forth fruit to Him; let no day pass without a word with Jesus; you are His spouse—can you live without a loving word from your husband? You are of His flesh and of His bones—let unbroken communion be the very habit of your being! Brethren, the Lord’s Supper is worship rendered to Jesus, and is mainly an act which begins and ends upon Him; you commemorate His death, you set forth His flesh and blood; your union and communion with Christ are not so much meant to benefit others, as to spend it upon Him! Therefore attend to it for His sake; let your eyes be fixed upon only Him! Whatever others may think of your raptures and delights in Jesus—however much they may call them emotional and unpractical—remain content with having done it unto Him!

Bear with me while I mention other ways in which you may serve Jesus personally. You may do so by *sitting at His feet and learning of Him*, studying the Word of God, and pleading for the Holy Spirit to give you light into its meaning. Martha prepared a feast for Him, and our Lord did not blame her, but He gave Mary the preference who sat at His feet. One in the crowd said concerning Christ, “Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the paps that gave You suck.” To administer to His childhood seemed the highest of earthly favors, but Jesus said, “Yes, rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it.” Get that blessing! Hear it from His lips! Study His Word—make much of every syllable. Try to get at the essential spirit, and do not tarry in the killing letter—and you will then be personally serving Him, for as a teacher He is pleased when we are His attentive pupils! This is a sweet way of pleasing the Lord Christ. Then, brothers and sisters, remember, if you would serve Christ personally, you must *obey Him*. “Oh,” you say, “I did not think that would be a very choice way of *serving Him*.” Listen! “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” He has chosen *obedience* as the special pledge and token of our love! You have said, “I wish I could build a chapel, or support a minister or a missionary out of my own purse.” I wish you could, but still, Jesus has not selected *that* as *the* love token; He has said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” Complete, prayerful, habitual *obedience* to Christ is the choicest pledge of affection which we can present to our Lord! May His infinite mercy help us to present it!

We may do to Christ personal service, next, by being willing to *bear reproach* for His sake. When you are willing to take upon yourself the defense of a man’s character; to throw yourself so completely into him that the reproaches of them that reproach him fall upon you—you have rendered to that man no mean proof of love. Oh, brothers and sisters, if, when they laugh at you for Christ’s sake, you clap your hands for very glee to be counted worthy to be ridiculed for Him; if you take, joyfully, the spoiling of your goods, or the slandering of your character; if you know the meaning of this word, “Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you”—then have you rendered personal service to Him whom you love! And then you may sit down and be thankful for having been allowed to drink of His cup, and to be baptized with His baptism!

Further, you can show personal kindness to Christ by *caring for His church*. The Lord had forgiven Peter, and Peter, no doubt, wished to do something to prove his love. His Lord somewhat vexed him by three times putting to him the question, “Simon, son of Jonas, do you love Me?” And when the disciple had protested his love, the Master said to him, “Feed My sheep,” and, “Feed My lambs.” Go, then, and teach the little children and instruct those of riper years! What He has taught you, teach to others, and you will be doing service to Him! He bids you consider it so, for to you who love Him, He says, “Feed My sheep.” If you cannot serve with your tongue, there remains another mode of pleasing Jesus. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and relieve distress of every kind. “But that is not doing service for *Him*.” I have the best authority for saying that it is, for, “Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, I was hungry and you gave Me meat; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; sick and in prison, and you visited Me. Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, you have done it unto Me.” Actual gifts to the poor, and helps afforded to those who need them are grateful love tokens to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is not here, but His poor saints are; any saint is an

image of Christ, but a *poor* saint is the *express image* of Christ! There is something more about him than about the rich, in which he is even, in detail and circumstances, more like his Lord. Do, then, to your Lord's own members what you would have done to Him if He, Himself, were here!

Still, I think that every now and then, for Jesus, there ought to be a *little special wastefulness of love*. The woman with her alabaster box of very precious ointment would, no doubt, gladly have joined with the holy ones of substance who ministered to Him. I have no doubt she would very gladly have poured water on His feet when He came into the house weary, or she would have waited at the table when He ate. But all this would not have sufficed her ardent love. She wanted to perform an extraordinary act which would be all for Him! She looked at that precious box; she must break *that*, for she would give Him something which she could not afford to do every day; in fact, which she never did *attempt* to give but once in her life! Brothers and sisters, think of something special you can do for Jesus! Let it cost you something, and if it pinches you, so much the better! It will be sweet to bear a pinch for Jesus! Think of something that you could not justify in prudence if you had to sit down and talk it over. Do it for Him, not to talk about to others, afterwards, nor for others to brazen abroad; but do it for Him—and then if they do publish it, you need not be angry, for Jesus said, “Where ever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman has done, be told for a memorial of her.”

Be not showy, but do not be in such a great worry to hide your work for Jesus, for the knowledge of it may do other people good and lead them to imitate the deed. Still, do it unto Jesus, only. I cannot suggest what you should do; and it would be indelicate for me to attempt to do so. Who would think of suggesting to a wife what she should give to her husband as a special private love token? Oh, no! These things are too choice for others to meddle with; they are secrets between the Lord and His elect, suggestions of personal love which cannot come from without. Do you inquire, “What shall I do for Jesus to praise Him?” Bring forth the choicest that you have, and offer it when your heart is best attuned and ready for the giving of it! My whole soul thirsts to be doing this often, for I owe all I have, and all I am to Jesus, my Lord! Here stands a man before you who has not one single thing in the entire world but what he has received from his Lord! He has not a penny but what is lent him! He is clothed by charity, and fed by His mercy! He is a pauper by nature, and yet wealthier than a millionaire because he lives as a gentleman commoner upon the daily bounty of God in Christ Jesus! Here stands before you an unworthy servant of the best of masters! He is a poor relation of the most generous of householders! He is happy to be in such a case!

Are there other men and women here who owe all to my Lord? If they do, let it be said of them, “You serve the Lord Christ.” So let it be said of them while they live, and till they die! What better can they desire? For myself, I am resolved, by divine grace, more fully to yield my whole body, soul, and spirit to Him whose I am, whom I serve. May His grace be with you all. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—COLOSSIANS 3, 4:1-6.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—179, 710, 784.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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